

Warm March weather, Updated seasonal figures, Daylight Saving Time

Today's newsletter will have a very brief short-range weather forecast, as not much is happening. Computer models all agree on a warm ridge of high pressure developing over the Eastern Pacific and west coast.

Today's clouds are only bringing light showers to the Smith, Klamath, and Eel basins, with a few hundredths in the Cascades, and spot showers possibly for the rest of California. If any precip were to be squeezed out of the weak fronts today or Friday, the snow level would be between 8,000' and 10,000'. In fact, other than the north coast and Shasta areas, virtually no rainfall is in the forecast. The Feather River Basin projected precipitation is only 0.1" over the next 10 days.

Spring fever continues, with the following NWS Saturday/Sunday forecasts:

Sacramento	72/74
Fresno	75/78
San Francisco	65/67
South Lake Tahoe	58/63
Santa Maria	72/76

February's Northern Sierra precipitation index has been revised upwards to 169% of an average February; 13.5" total. March has contributed 0.2", putting the season at 83%; 29.8". An average water year ends with 50".

Last month was also cold and productive for the snowpack. March 1 snow course measurements by region finished with the North Coast at 94%, the Sacramento at 70%, the San Joaquin at 68%, and Tulare Lake basins averaging 56%. Snow sensor data as of March 7 put the statewide average snow water equivalent (SWE) at 63%. (Results from Nevada's snow survey put their content at 70% of average, for comparison.)

<http://www.publicaffairs.water.ca.gov/newsreleases/2007/030207snow.cfm>

<http://cdec.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/reports/DLYSWEQ.html>

With the short to mid-range forecast coming in dry and sunny, melting will be the weather word the next couple of weeks. Long-range computer models hint at a wetter pattern from the 17th through 20th of March.

Cold storms are still a possibility even in late spring, but there is little chance we'll reach a normal April 1 average. However, reservoir storage percentages of average for this time of year are in very good shape:

Shasta	112%
Oroville	117%
Folsom	107%
New Melones	138%
Don Pedro	115%
San Luis	106%

Forecasted April–July runoff percentages of normal, based on March 1 data stand at:

Bend – American	71%
Stanislaus – San Joaquin	66%
Kings – Kern	56%
Truckee, Walker, Carson	63%

The trend for southern California having a dry year is exemplified with L.A. facing its driest year ever. Only 2.4" of rain has fallen in downtown L.A. since July 1, the worst since 1924, when only 2.5" had fallen through March 22nd. Winter wheat losses could be substantial in Riverside County, thanks to freezing February temps, and a dry spring. Wildfire conditions will be primed.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME: Set your clocks ahead one hour this weekend.

Spring forward at 2:00am Saturday into Sunday morning. This is the first year for new U.S. standards, which extend Daylight Saving Time 4 weeks, based on the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

The 2007 California Extreme Precipitation Symposium will be held on Friday, April 13. This year the Symposium is being held as part of the American River Watershed Conference (ARWC) at California State University, Sacramento, on April 12–13. This year's theme is:

Estimating Extreme Floods in California's Central Valley. For Symposium agenda and registration information please go to:

www.arwi.us/precip

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